



St Thomas' Catholic Primary School, Willoughby

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Diocese of Broken Bay. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education.

The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), approved by the School's Consultant, demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and the CSO. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

The School's purpose is articulated through our Mission Statement: To educate and form

- students in Catholic discipleship by creating a place where students
- grow in their relationship with God
- strive for excellence in the development of the whole person in the context of contemporary life
- reach out through service to others.

The School is well regarded in the local community as providing an excellent, well balanced education for students and for its sense of community and pastoral care.

This report provides an overview of activities and events during the 2016 school year which contributed to the achievement of our goals and the continued development of our Catholic school community.

2016 was a full and eventful year and we are proud of the broad range of our successes. These included excellent NAPLAN results, successful debating teams in the Independent Schools Debating Association and Sydney Debating Network Competitions, sports representation at State level, and an outstandingly successful Art and Craft Show.

The thoughtful ongoing implementation of technology to maximise engagement and learning has been a notable success at the School.

Parent Body Message

The Parents & Friends Association (P&F) delivered on its objective to develop a strong school community and foster the relationship between the parents, the School and the Parish. The P&F surveyed parents as to future objectives in 2015 and delivered on implementing suggestions and new initiatives throughout 2016.

From the social functions commencing with the tissues & champagne welcome for Kindergarten parents, through the various Masses, morning teas, welcome party and fundraising events, the P&F's network of volunteers did an outstanding job of coordinating these occasions for families.

A standout contribution of the P&F is the pastoral care committee which is supported by family volunteers and delivers on the core objective of caring for the community as a whole. The overwhelming volunteer assistance offered by families is a credit to the strength of the fabric of our community.

The annual Art and Craft Show held in October was a success. The Show delivers on the objective of underpinning the collaboration between parents and supporters and is a major benefit for the School community.

Student Body Message

2017 has been an exciting year for the student leadership teams. Our Environment Team made a wall mural to celebrate World Environment Day. Every student and teacher in the school placed a hand print on a tree design which is now hung in the undercroft.

Our Stage 3 Project Based Learning work kept us very busy learning from experts who presented master classes for us on the topics we needed to learn about. In Term 3 we made all of the props and costumes for our school musical *Jonah - A Fishy Tail* and we helped choreograph the dances for the younger grades. We learned so much about what it takes to create a concert with 360 participants.

Parish Priest's Message

2016 was my first year as Parish Priest of Lower North Shore with its three communities which includes St Thomas Church and school.

St Thomas School has a long and proud history in Willoughby and has educated many generations of Catholic students giving them a strong foundation in education including helping them to grow in their faith.

I enjoy the many opportunities I have during the year of praying with the students at weekday Mass and in particular with our Sunday Class Masses held throughout the year. I also enjoy the privilege I have in celebrating with the students their first Reconciliation and Communion and being present when Bishop Peter celebrated their Confirmation.

'It takes a village to educate a child', so the saying goes. It certainly takes a family and a school and a parish to educate a child to grow towards adulthood and to equip them with a vibrant faith. I thank in particular our teachers who work with you as parents in supporting the growth of your children.

School Features

St Thomas' Catholic Primary School Willoughby, is a Catholic systemic co-educational school.

The School provides for the educational needs of children from Kindergarten to Year 6 and draws its enrolments primarily from the Parish of the Lower North Shore. The School is set in an attractive setting with a challenging and stimulating outdoor play environment including large areas of natural and constructed shaded play spaces.

The School was founded by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1928 and the School's recently developed vision statement draws on the Josephite Charism: *St Thomas' Catholic School, Willoughby, exists to educate and form students in Catholic discipleship by creating a place where students: grow in their relationship with God; strive for excellence in the development of the whole person in the context of contemporary life; and reach out through service to others.*

The School's rich and broad curricula offers a diverse Creative Arts program including senior and junior bands and choirs, instrumental tuition, biannual whole school musical, inter-school debating and a variety of competitive and experiential sporting events. Students debate for Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney in the Primary A and Primary B divisions of competitions where primary teams are a prerequisite of inclusion. Lunch clubs include double dutch skipping, chess, library, jazz improvisation and sport provide additional stimulation for all grades.

A rich musical environment is provided through junior and senior choirs as well as recorder and keyboard lessons. Our training and concert bands are provided as extra-curricular enrichment.

The School has undergone a major upgrade over the last few years. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards, ipads and laptop computers. The School has an extensive playground and sports equipment and abundant shade provided by 5 magnificent Morton Bay Fig trees and two large shade structures. The School's media centre, based in the new School Library, has every facility to assist learning.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2016. Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
182	178	63	360

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolments have grown each year with 2016 being no exception. The retention rate for boys in Years 5 and 6 has steadily increased which has coincided with community confidence in the School being able to offer a progressive education well suited to boys in these senior years.

Enrolment Policy

The School follows the *Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. The policy encourages the local Catholic community, under the leadership of the parish priest and principal, to look upon the time of enrolment as a potential occasion for ongoing evangelisation. The policy calls upon parents to examine their present faith commitments, to develop their role as prime educators of their children in faith and to immerse themselves in the communal, liturgical, ministerial and service dimensions of the parish. Copies of this policy and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the CSO website or by contacting the CSO.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2016 was 94.37 %. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
94 %	95 %	94 %	95 %	94 %	93 %	95 %

Managing Student Non-Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so, the School, under the leadership of the principal:

 provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging

- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address nonattendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the School's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non-attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non-attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non-attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the CSO and the relevant Department of Education officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the School in collaboration with parents, provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible. The CSO monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's School Review and Development (SRD) processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the *Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System* (password required).

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2016:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
23	5	28

* This number includes 14 full-time teachers and 9 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

The NSW government requires that this Report detail the number of teachers in particular categories. The following table sets out this information. Further information about can be obtained from the My School website.

	Teacher Qualifications		
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	23	
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0	

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning (PL) can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the CSO. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking staff professional learning. Individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes. The following table provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

Day 1	Mathematics - MAI Data, Analysis & Models of enrichment and accommodation
Day 2	Developing the Teachers Reference section of the Library - Eliminating old resources and planning for the future
Day 3	Who is our Neighbour? - Indentifying potential staff outreach through engaging with local communities in need.

SECTION FIVE: MISSION

As a Catholic community, the School shares in the mission of the local Church: "The Diocese of Broken Bay exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as friends in the Lord and sent out to be missionary disciples."

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to educate and form young people in faith. The School provides formal Religious Education as well as formational opportunities through which the students participate in the life of a Catholic community. Students are invited to serve others, especially the poor and those who are marginalised.

The School's Religious Education (RE) program is based on the Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explore the Catholic faith, the purpose of life and how we live it.

Formational experiences are provided for students, staff, parents and caregivers. Students regularly celebrate Mass and pray together. Students are invited to participate in age appropriate sacramental and missionary activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus and making the world a better place.

The Sisters of St Joseph from Mount Street, North Sydney were the foundational teachers at the School. Their continued presence until 1979 gave the School a charism that is still alive today. Therefore, St Mary MacKillop has a special place in the School's ethos and her feast day is celebrated every year.

The School has a rich liturgical and educational program for all students, staff and the community. Throughout the year the School gathers to celebrate feast days and special events in the tradition of our faith. Each grade has an opportunity to prepare one of these Masses or liturgies and to participate in a more active way. The celebration of whole School Masses and class Masses throughout the year provides opportunities for each child to contribute meaningfully through these celebrations and to respond to the call for Catholic Discipleship. The opening School Mass and grade Masses are held on Sundays, while others are held on Thursdays (such as Grandparent's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day). Attendance at weekday Masses with the Parish, to enable students to understand the different ways in which Mass can be celebrated, is also a feature.

Environmental teams, liturgical teams and social justice teams are among the varied roles for leadership in Year 6, as well as opportunities for student voice to be heard and acted upon through the Student Representative Council (SRC) with representatives from Kindergarten to Year 6 led by the School Captains.

The Parish based Sacramental program is fully supported by the School, with many parents volunteering to lead groups. The School prayer is prayed on a regular basis and the Ignatian Examen is practised to help students to identify their own relationships with God and

others.

All staff are encouraged and supported to extended their religious and theological knowledge through further education. The School engages staff in ongoing adult faith formation through spiritual retreat days and staff meetings. The parent and Parish community are also invited to spiritual retreat days held twice a year on the School premises with free child minding offered.

Primary Curriculum

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

In 2016 the School implemented the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in History. The preliminary work in familiarising staff with the new NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in Geography was commenced in Term 4. In 2017 Catholic Schools Office staff will further support the process of unit writing and teaching.

In Term 4 a School Advisory Team commenced work on providing support to the school in order to foster an effective cross-curricular model for the provision of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The Team's work has commenced with the mapping of a three year strategy. Early in 2017 the Team will map existing patterns of STEM study and survey parent opinion about this important area.

Project Based Learning is the method of curriculum delivery in the upper primary grades with plans to extend this to Stage 2 in 2017. The School provides technology rich, real world, long term problem solving opportunities across a wide range of skill areas to engage students in their learning. The School selected Project Based Learning because of its strong emphasis on developing students non-cognitive capabilities - critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, curiosity, interpersonal and communication skills, self-regulation, grit, entrepreneurial skills, teamwork and craftsmanship. The feedback, provided by the schools our students move on to, is that our students manage the transition to a new site and new requirements with ease due to their PBL experiences.

Each year, the School attends a Curriculum Focus Day (CFD) along with other schools in the Diocese. These days engage teachers in discussion not only about regulatory requirements but also about the quality of the teaching and learning experiences. At each of these days, the School has received favourable reports with regard to its practice. One such report comment (2016 CFD) stated that 'student work samples in both English and Mathematics reflect a consistent understanding by teachers of the purpose of assessment in the teaching/learning cycle'. This reflects the emphasis the School has placed on assessment to improve student outcomes over time.

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in the aspects of literacy and numeracy compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand. Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions. Additional NAPLAN student performance information can also be accessed from the My School website.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
	Grammar and Punctuation	91.67 %	52.50 %	0.00 %	9.60 %
Year 3	Reading	93.33 %	49.40 %	0.00 %	11.50 %
	Writing	80.00 %	48.80 %	1.67 %	6.20 %
	Spelling	78.33 %	46.40 %	0.00 %	12.40 %
	Numeracy	65.00 %	35.60 %	0.00 %	13.40 %

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	62.16 %	36.30 %	8.11 %	15.00 %
	Reading	59.46 %	35.30 %	5.41 %	15.50 %
	Writing	32.43 %	17.20 %	10.81 %	18.10 %
	Spelling	56.76 %	29.80 %	5.41 %	17.20 %
	Numeracy	45.95 %	28.30 %	10.81 %	16.50 %

NAPLAN Comments

Analysis of 2016 NAPLAN data indicated a number of key strengths while also assisting in the

identification of future directions for growth.

Although the School's trend data, using the statistical mean, shows some minor cohort-driven fluctuations over the past 6 years, the results remain well above Diocesan and State levels and continue to grow. Significant growth has occurred in the number of students achieving Band 7 results in Year 5 spelling but a reduction of Band 7 & 8 in numeracy. Year 3 results showed a continued movement towards higher representation in Bands 5 & 6. Increased representation in the top bands and improved individual student growth from Year 3 to Year 5 can be attributed to the development across the School of quality data collection, analysis and responsive focused teaching.

A focus for staff investigation will be to analyse data and teaching practices to determine why writing and spelling deviated from this pattern. Co-teaching in English and Mathematics will focus on refining the teaching in these areas and to be continued in 2017.

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies and procedures are informed by the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the *National Safe Schools Framework (2011) (NSSF)* that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a pre-requisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The *Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System* (the 'Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. The framework includes ten pathways that are intended to assist school communities to create safe schools that foster wellbeing for learning and positive, caring relationships. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSO website or by contacting the CSO.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the *Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. Policies operate within a context of social justice, compassion, reconciliation and forgiveness. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSO website or by contacting the CSO.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is based on and informed by the *Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and is aligned to the *Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools* and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSO website or by contacting the CSO.

Complaints and Grievances Policy

The School follows the *Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools*. A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved

without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSO website or by contacting the CSO.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Student leadership continues to be a significant highlight of School life in 2016. The Year 6 cohort showed strong leadership, especially in their management of the Student Representative Council (SRC). Issues expressed by class groups in their class meeting are brought up for discussion at the fortnightly SRC meetings. Class representatives who attended the SRC meetings were selected for the term. Every class was skilled in conducting a class meeting by the School Captains at the beginning of the year. This gave the students a voice and the opportunity to discuss solutions to the problems that were presented, including the care of school resources and adherence with the School Rules.

Each Year 6 student had a leadership role with specific responsibilities as well as opportunities to make suggestions to further enhance their role. This on-going initiative, developed over the past six years, has promoted respect and responsibility among the group.

Respect and responsibility for students as learners as well as members of the School and Parish community is encouraged. One of the ways that this is demonstrated is through the fundraising for charitable organisations that occurs within the school student body and the awareness raising that occurs through these initiatives.

SECTION NINE: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Strategic planning ensures a common purpose and agreed values are established. In Broken Bay systemic schools, this common purpose and agreed values along with goals, targets and key improvement strategies are documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This SIP is a three year planning document and is used to record the School's progress in working towards priorities for improvement in three domains: Mission, Pastoral Care, Learning and Teaching. School improvement planning is supported systemically by the *Diocesan Leading Learning* initiative. This initiative is research based and has been developed in partnership with the University of Auckland.

Key Improvements Achieved

In 2016 the School achieved the following improvements:

- student liturgy leaders worked with the Religious Education Co-ordinator to develop skills in writing and presenting a model of prayer at Monday morning assembly
- established student goal setting across the school in Mathematics so that students were able to name what they could already do and what they needed to work on
- the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and the Pastoral Care Team were combined into one highly responsive and effective body which has committed to feed back to the parent body and staff after each meeting twice per term.
- KidsMatter was formally launched at St Thomas' in Term 4 and Wellbeing Week celebrated each term in Week 6

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

In 2017 the School improvement goals are:

- To strengthen student and parent discipleship through faith and action
- To develop learners as critical, creative, problem solvers
- To authentically integrate wellbeing for learning and learning for wellbeing

SECTION TEN: COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, a variety of processes have been used to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

The anticipated P&F survey is to be delivered early in 2017. Anecdotal evidence provides rich evidence of parent satisfaction around the provision of education at the School. Students who were scheduled to leave the School to continue their education at a variety of private schools have remained at the School due to the range of experiences and the quality of education provided.

Student Satisfaction

Anecdotal evidence obtained through the SRC indicates that students feel that their concerns are heard and responded to in a timely fashion. Educational and physical improvements to the School have helped the student body feel proud of being a part of the school community. Senior students expressed a greater desire to remain at the School for Years 5 and 6 as they are confident that the quality of education offered here is excellent.

Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction is surveyed annually with the degree of satisfaction around the setting and meeting of teachers' individual learning goals rated as high in 2016. Many teachers chose to challenge themselves professionally by moving a number of grades for 2017, confident that this move would be supported by the leadership team.

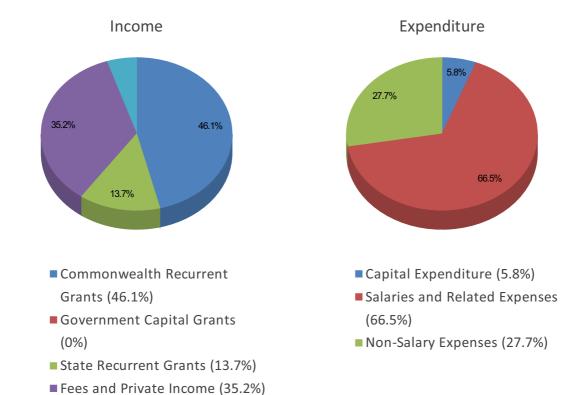
The School has a low staff turn over each year with many staff seeking and having opportunities to lead projects throughout 2016 and to take on temporary leadership team roles in an acting capacity.

A number of staff are returning from extended maternity leave in 2017 and the School has been able to provide each of them with a supportive job share position which takes into account the returning teachers less predictable family commitments.

Part-time staff members have made decisions to specialise their teaching and the School eagerly anticipates the enrichment of our schools programs which this will deliver.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consistent with the BOSTES requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website. Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Broken Bay Diocese Annual Report.



RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME			
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$1,871,863		
Government Capital Grants	\$0		
State Recurrent Grants	\$555,878		
Fees and Private Income	\$1,428,368		
Other Capital Income	\$206,411		
Total Income	\$4,062,520		

Other Capital Income (5.1%)

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Capital Expenditure	\$239,838			
Salaries and Related Expenses	\$2,741,350			
Non-Salary Expenses	\$1,142,929			
Total Expenditure	\$4,124,116			